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# Art News

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## THE OLD TRAMP.

I.

Hello, old blokies, I won't jigger ye,  
Ye who [spits] have all neen up the big tree,  
Just like York Bob who ne'er worked for a meal,  
But allers played foxy [sniggers] and allers did squeal,  
For wh-ever you be,  
Follow my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

II.

I'm just out of jail—damn the Alb'ny pen—  
Five year's a-killin' or killin' a man  
Again I can loaf now o'er God's wide earth  
'Til for my fi-al doss they're fixin' the berth.  
For I'm as you see,  
True to my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

III.

I once snared a kid, the jolliest lad 'bout;  
We went bummin' from drinkin' bout to bout,  
We had our three [spits] square meals ev'ry day,  
Our hang-uts with lad, tramps were sure to begay.  
For whoever shed be,  
Followed my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

IV.

And if our chuck for beer kegs grew low, [hicoughs]  
My kid hust'd penni-s an hour or so;  
For isn't it the nature o' each free man  
To gather some chuck [sniggers] without work, if he can?  
For, as you [hicoughs] see,  
It's my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

V.

Ridin' as dead beats a train one dark night.  
The con, scoutin' 'round with his blast'd old light,  
Shouted—we just laid low at some snide place—  
For a dime or tie [grunts] would timber my face.  
For damn him even he  
Followed my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

VI.

"Get out fawny scoundrel!" I shrieked with pain,  
My kid was fightin' the con in the rain;  
H- sitru-k gravel—just as the train did start—  
The wheels went crunchin' right o'er his young, throbbing  
heart.  
As strange as it could be  
Seemed then my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

VII.

But my blokies, it's all over and past,  
I'll go bummmin' 'gain a long as I last.  
Here's all my chick for a big keg of beer,  
We'll drink to all o'le [spits] tramps of the world good cheer!  
For all of us, Anna May  
Follow my philo-phy—  
All mankind's a-trampin' for boodle and booze!

ONCE upon a time Bronson Howard, the playwright, was an art critic.

THE Paris Salon opens this year on the 20th of April, the Champ de Mars a few days later.

I WISH art dealers would have the ordinary politeness of sending me announcements of their exhibitions.

NINTH Annual Exhibition of the Art Institute of Chicago, April 28th-June 13th. Collection day, April 12th.

THOSE who believe in the renascence of our industrial arts will find invigorating words of encouragement in Bing's "La Culture en Amérique."

LANDSCAPES of R. L. Pyne are owned by Mr. Skillman, of Jersey City, by the late Mr. John Just, by Messrs. Roger Foster, Baner, Delcow, Delebar and others.

DAVID NEAL, who is painting potboiler portraits in America from time to time, has one of his large serious pictures, the "Retour de Chasse," at Blakeslee's. It is quite "modern."

C. D. WELDON, at 51 West 10th street, has probably the most important collection of Japanese kakemonos and prints in this country. Visitors, I believe, are welcome on Sunday afternoons.

WHISPERINGS of the Madison Square Tower. "The three disgraces of our contemporary intellectual life are: Richard Hovey the Narcissus, Bliss Carman the Icarus, and Sadakichi Hartmann the Anteros of American literature."

JOHN GELLATLY, of 20 West 21st street, has purchased Ryder's "Flying Dutchman." This gentleman owns some of the best specimens of Dewing's painting; also indulges in Newman's, F. C. Jones' and Barse, Jr.'s. Dewing, Jones and Barse. What a salad!

## Nineteenth Exhibition of the Society of American Artists.

FIRST of all, you must pilgrim to George W. Maynard's sporting sea-nymphs. Art only begins with the mediocrity of Maynard's work. It is an indifferent, standard mediocrity, in no way interesting and decidedly commonplace, avoiding any display of extremes, or individuality, which might excite your nerves and cause you to forget your surroundings. It is a complacent, popular American mediocrity. To award to such a picture the Shaw Fund prize is not merely a bad investment for the donor, but a sacrilege committed in the name of art. The jury surely could have selected an artist more worthy of such encouragement. But it probably was Maynard's turn this time, and there is no use of arguing.

Bruce Crane is the winner of the Webb Prize. I had to smile when I found it out. Well, it was probably Bruce Crane's turn, too, and there is no use of arguing. However, in this case the jury was more just. His "Signs of Spring" is, sorry to state, if not the best landscape in the exhibition, at least as good as any of the others. I personally might prefer Appleton Browne's "Autumn on the Merrimac," Ch. M. Young's "Winter," in violet tints, E. W. Redfield's "Edge Hill Valley," and art critic Ben Foster's "Moonshine Mist;" or numbers 66, 88, 210, 232, 238, 341,

and nearly all others; but as Bruce Crane, who has grown old in fabricating saleable pictures, has for once abolished his factory style, he perhaps deserves this award for his heroic efforts in the right direction.

Landscape in this exhibit, with exception of McIlhenny's and a few others, are dangerously near the border line of Maynard mediocrity. Nearly all are haphazard views, without composition, sketchy in execution, and none doing credit to the reputation that the American landscape painters have of being the best in the world.

Needham's "Winter Snows," a Madison Square scene, is a good example of vigorous outdoor work, painted on the spot, without the help of kodaks.

W. A. Coffin should coffin himself and his pictures; and as he is one of our much esteemed art critics, do the same service to society artists like Low, Kenyon Cox, Beckwith, Maynard, etc., and lay them out properly.

The picture which made the strongest impression upon me is Winslow Homer's "The Lookout." Criticism grows dumb. I bow my head in reverence. It is a masterpiece. Words cannot increase or deprecate its value; it speaks for itself. Go and look at it. A glimpse of the swaying upper works of a vessel, the sea, white in the starlight over the rail, and just under the ship's bell, a lifted hand and a rugged face—stern and weather-beaten like the bronzen bell—with parted lips, shouting "All's well." It is one of the few paintings of which I carried away a recollection that will resist the tide of time, and should I ever in day-dreams recall the Society exhibition of this year, "The Lookout" will surely present itself first. All the rest will sink into oblivion.

A great surprise to me were Herter's studies in black, two women in Japanese robes, wrapped in the shadows of mystery. They are poetic, suggestive, decorative and carefully finished without having lost their spontaneity. I never believed that Herter, who seemed only pretty to me hitherto, could combine so much strength with beauty. They are "expressions of emotion in the presence of Japanese gowns," as the art critic of the *Evening Telegram* aptly said; pictures before which one can sit and dream without regret for at least fifteen minutes, which is much, considering the shortness and rush of our modern life.

Sargent is represented by two portraits. They show his usual dash and brilliancy. I do not understand how anybody can resist the charm of this grotesque and sensational originality, combined as it is with such a marvelous technic. The surety and virility of his brushwork is as

delightful as Whistler's mannerisms and subtlety and suggestiveness of style. In every touch of the brush is a spark of genius.

There are quite a number of good portraits. E. Gordigiani's little girl in the Velasquez style, Mrs. Gotthold's sympathetic "Mother and Child," Alexander's "Woman in Gray," painted in a crude but interesting manner on rough canvas for mural purposes, I. M. Gaugengigl's small-sized likeness of a gentleman, J. H. Boston's head of a girl, of unexpected solidity and dash, Augustus Vincent Tack's "Maid Marion," and several others that space forbids me to mention.

Chase's technic seems to me steadily progressing. Chase's "Studio" and "For the Little One," although rather shallow in contents, reveal subtleties that are on a par with Degas.

About Benson's "My Little Girl" I have nothing particular to say. It is well painted, but I would not give it hanging room, even if I owned a palace of ten thousand rooms. Prellwitz's "Dante" (second edition), in its dull, dreary co'rs, looks as if it had been painted on a rainy American Sunday, which thwarts even the best intentions.

Mrs. McMonie's nudes are delicious in color and remind strongly of Zorn.

Bryson Burroughs' "La Belle Dame sans Merci" I liked better when I saw it in his studio. The color is a trifle hard and La Belle Dame rather too yellow.

Edward Simmons sent two marines. Simmons is a good "stock" painter. He is at home in all parts. He can paint a young girl putting on her stocking with touches of French frivolity; he can paint decorations with touches of the sublime. In two of his more important pictures, one of which I saw at Philadelphia and the other in the Grand Union Hotel, he would have climbed the very heights of pictorial art if a tin coffee pot (that could have aroused the envy of Chase) in one and the wood shavings in the other had not been painted in such a devilish clever manner that they attracted the principal attention.

Though we are accustomed to tiresome and pedantic work from W. H. Low, I would not have thought him capable of such a *banalité* as his "Profile." I never thought that Mr. Low's art could sink so low.

Also Kenyon Cox, the severe drawing master of the League, in his "Hunting Nymph" rises hardly above the Maynard mediocrity. It is, however, fairly well drawn.

Carroll Beckwith's art is also in the descent, rather "shot silk;" (like Shirlaw, in a still more pronounced manner,) he has to suffer from the fate that his later work did not come up to the standard the public and profession had expected

after seeing his youthful efforts. He has no longer the power of attracting people who, once disinterested, have turned away to others. The younger men do not believe any more in him.

There are many other pictures over whom the art critic cannot lose many words. For instance, innocent Joe Evans's gardens; E. A. Bell's pictures, looking so "self-chastised;" Fowler portrait, showing that he is not without talent in humbler fields of art; M. L. Macomber's religious sentimentalism, and Daingerfield's simulation of devotion.

Emil Carlsen's still lifes are exceedingly clever, but so cold! I wonder involuntarily if that man has any fire in his soul to warm his mentality.

Mosler, Jr.'s, "Noonday" is a vigorous bit of sunlight and foliage painting.

Irving Wiles, who had such a stunning head at the Fall Academy, a veritable *tour de force*, hardly did himself justice in his "Russian Tea."

Nor did I particularly fancy Ch. C. Curran's work, of whom one generally can expect something pleasing, intelligent and novel.

Lungren's "Winter Wedding" shows too plainly that it is painted by a man who deteriorates his otherwise so promising work by too much black and white practice.

Franzen, one of our few figure painters, although rather loud and morose in coloring, is modern to his finger tips, personally attractive to me for a mixture of aristocratic and Bohemian elements (visible also in other artists, for instance, in Lambert); his art has a mild flavor of what the Germans call *Tendenzmalerei*. Franzen does not merely throw a confused veil of poetical mist over the simple doings of simple folks, but expounds proletarian socialism as well as it can be done by the brush.

Illustrators Hyde and Smedley should be satisfied with their professional successes instead of seeking new laurels as painters. Even Abbey does not particularly interest me as a wielder of the brush.

The same advice, however, does not apply to Sterner's "Roderic Usher et la Dame Madeleine." He should paint, as he indicates more and more that he has the power of suggestion and can read deeply in the human soul.

As the Society proposes to be in touch with all the tendencies of the hour, it might be interesting, before I conclude, to investigate how far they are *fin de siècle* in 57th street. *Fin de siècle* is Gustav Verbeck, whose name is spelt differently in each catalogue, an effeminate, bald-headed young dreamer of Dutch descent, who has lived for a long time in Japan. Verbeck regaled us at the Fall Academy with a tiger under the spell of a red-clad damsel (or is the damsel under the spell of the tiger?), both looking as ethereal as if they had lived in the desert without food for a longer time than would be enjoyable. This same lady appears again in his "Fantaisie Hellenique"

(why Hellenique?). The lack of food must not have agreed with her; the robe has become too large for her, and she looks more ethereal than ever; the tiger has left her—he probably died from starvation—but the animal kingdom still seems to cling to her, as two shades of goats gambol about her. Where all this takes place is difficult to discern, as her environments are hopelessly blurred; only the red Japenesque robe looms up in "triumphant monotony." This "Fantaisie Hellenique," with its gilded spaghetti frame, represents a very amusing phase of art. One can't take it seriously and yet likes to look at it, smiling and wondering what it all means. I prefer such a decorative bit of faded medieval tapestry to any variety act and am delighted that contemporary art innovations can be reflected in such a harmless, amusing puzzle.

Equally amusing to me is Bobbie Reid's endeavor to paint ethereally. Why, he, the joyous bon vivant, leader of the impressionists and poet of frivolity—it is absurd!

Finn, later from Paris, furnishes with his "Etude" the latest note of eccentricity, a most forlorn-looking nude posing grotesquely on a couch.

Other newcomers are Ethel Isadore Brown, with her "Sabrina," exquisite in parts, Fromuth, with his suggestive pastel drawings of sailing vessels, H. D. Murphy's flat surface landscapes, Moschowitz's lushious "Song" and Charles Hopkinson's various exhibits, notably two "Breton Women" and "Toy Boats."

Maxfield Parrish, who accomplished the difficult task of using a humorous composition for mural purposes in the grill room of some Philadelphia club, sends two specimens of his curious work, a design for a Bulletin Board and a composition, "The Sandman." The latter is exceedingly skillfully drawn, although not strictly original, and colored with subdued gradations of greens and blues that produce the effect of stained glass.

Of the flower pictures I liked Mrs. Oakey Dewing's "Rose Garden" best. It revealed the soul of the flowers and seemed to me superior to those of Abbott Thayer, who has the reputation of being quite a remarkable flower painter.

Women push themselves to the foreground everywhere, but the result in art is rather disappointing and tiresome. Why do they always paint such trifling subjects? Why do they always imitate men, instead of trying to solve problems which have never been touched before? The women artists have still to come—Rosa Bonheur was a mere suggestion—who can throw a new radiance over art by the psycho-physiological elements of their sex, and only then the large number of women will be justified in modern art. The woman who can paint men as we have painted women, and paint women as we have painted men, will win for herself the laurel wreath of fame. Where is the young paintress who has such an ambition? I would like to make her acquaintance.

P. S.—Laura Hills can be recommended as a painter of miniatures.

The Albrecht Dürer Verein should look at P. W. Bartlett's patina and *cire perdue* bronzes and meditate!

Mary Shepard Greene's "Summer" shows a good deal of sentiment.

Two girls with kittens also interested me. Both by Mabel Stuart.

Of course, I should probably also say something about Alexander Harrison's "Le grand miroir" and Th. Eakins' "Cello Player," Paul Dessar's "Elizabeth," but as it is impossible to review every picture, particularly in an exhibition whose keynote is Maynard mediocrity, I can simply mention those that made an impression upon me, and sometimes the novelties of a newcomer seem more interesting than the mature work of well-known artists.

THIRTY-TWO Horatio Walkers were exhibited for two weeks at the end of March in the new gallery of Cottier & Co. Horatio Walker is an artist who struggles for something, who nourishes an ardent desire to realize *great art*. He has the rare gift of sifting his subjects from unnecessary details, and only to paint the essentials, and combine realism and classicism to a decorative as well as suggestive art which satisfies the most modern elements. Pictures like "The Harrower," "Tree Fellers," "Hauling the Log," "A String Morning," can challenge competition with any modern European cattle and landscape paintings. Their *raffine* simplicity and classic calmness have the purifying influence of a song of Horace. Many professionals look, for instance, at his Harrower rather contemptuously and invariably tumble over one of the forelegs of the bull, "it is not well drawn, badly painted, in short no leg at all." But I exclaim with Mr. Schilling—by the by of the coming men, one of Montross's protégés—"if they can't see anything else! For heaven's sake." Amusing and interesting to me is the conception Walker entertains of cattle and household animals. He is on very intimate terms with them. He knows their ways of life, and feels with them their joys and troubles of existence. Horatio Walker's animals seem to know something of Goethe's "Weltenschmerz;" his oxen are represented as "beasts of toil," his cows seem to be resigned to a fate of drudgery, his sheep, some of which show traits of Schenck's and Mauve's breeds, look so forlorn and ascetic like the almshouse inmates who were lost in the forest in Maeterlinck's play "Les Aveugles." Also over his landscapes, those forest clearings with a few yellow leaves shivering in barren branches, hovers an atmosphere of loneliness and melancholia, only here and there in the background interrupted by a vague indication like spring, that only a country whose soil is desolate and barren and snowbound one-half of the year can exhale. I have spent one winter in Canada, and some of its sad, silent winter scenes have made a deep, most vivid impression upon my mind. Up there the farmers have something of Millet's "sublime muckiness and original pent fury," and looking at Walker's pictures I involuntarily asked myself, "How many human lives had to be sacrificed to conquer that Canadian desolation for the usances of civilization?" Only his pigs know how to take life, they lie complacently in their sty, in the midst of their rich *milieu* of manure, rotting straw and mire, and in color, conception and technical handling are almost without exception masterpieces. I did not fancy, however, his "Prodigal Son," although the youth looks as shockhaired, gaunt and weird as I did when I was young and callow.

## Seventy-Second Annual Exhibition of the National Academy of Design.

IN writing about American exhibitions I have found out one peculiarity, namely, the great difficulty of saying anything if I do not write down my impressions as soon as I have left the gallery. Should a few days elapse, I would not trust my memory.

This 72nd Exhibition of the A. of D. does not contain a single picture that a talented man might not learn to paint in 25 years, and the majority of them in a much shorter time. This is a rather dismal state of affairs. It does not render art criticism a very enviable profession.

It does not contain a single picture for posterity except it were Daniel Huntington's "Projectors of the Atlantic Cable." Most interesting to me was "Bobbie" Reid's T. B. Clark prize panel, "Moonrise." It is purely decorative, and pleasing to the eye, its colors being "bleu de songe," as Stephane Mallarmé would say. As usually, it is very carelessly done, and all unnecessary work, like the execution of hands and feet, carefully avoided. I looked at it for a long time and got a good deal of amusement out of it.

E. C. Tarbell's "Josephine" seems to be a sister of Benson's little girl at the society, only coarser in grain, and Josephine's mother apparently is fond of Japanese kimonos, but why we should particularly be interested in their domestic affairs I cannot discern.

C. D. Weldon's "Saved from the Wreck" is a capital illustration, as long as it does not pretend to be anything else, which cannot be said of similar exhibits of Clinediust, Smedley and Jennie Brownscombe. Reproductions of the latter might have a good sale.

Henry Mosler's "Invoking God's Blessing," a Puritan scene, is carefully observed, correctly costumed, conceived with feeling and cleverly composed and painted.

Kenyon Cox's "Bird Song," Macomber's "St. Katherine" and Dielman's "Azalea" are pleasing little pictures. E. A. Bell in his "Spring Flowers" did a piece of diligent, conscientious work, poetical, and yet not too far removed from beauty and truth.

W. M. Chase has not done himself justice in his life size portrait. He should not exhibit such pictures.

Alas, how many pictures of this exhibit should never be shown, or better still, never have been painted. About three-fourths.

Why, there are some men who mistake the venerable Academy for one of those cheap picture-frame stores, where they can sell paintings by the dozen. The audacity of several gentlemen is amazing. One feels like bursting out into a laugh at their insolence, if it were not so heart-rendingly sad.

Some of the portraits would do honor to any Bowery photograph gallery.

Then there is H. W. Watrous, with all the glories of his niggling method, at which Philis-